A Philosophical Man

Igor was born in Moscow and was from an Orthodox family. His family had moved to Vienna after World War II. Growing up in a modest apartment on the outskirts of Vienna, Igor spent much of his youth surrounded by reminders of both hardship and resilience. The city's bustling streets and the muted resilience of its people became a backdrop for his formative years, instilling in him a sense of endurance and adaptability.

Igor was constantly in the principal's bad book because of his mischievous behaviour and disregard for what his teachers had planned for him. He knew how to approach people to obtain what he wanted because he was an astute observer, and most of the time he succeeded. One day after applying, he was hired by the Ministry of Defence after graduating from high school. His pals questioned if success was due to merit or persuasion. But he even impressed his supervisors with how well, carefully, and punctually he completed his duties. He had to travel to Moscow after being requested to enlist in the special forces. Being careful and on time does not qualify someone as a special forces agent. He needed to become skilled at deceit if he were to get anywhere. From an early age, his father's commitment to military service had a profound effect on him. The discipline and rigour that defined his father's character became the foundation of Igor's ~~upbringing. There was~~ . There was little~~little~~ room for privilege or indulgence; instead, values, hard work, and sacrifice were the hallmarks of this era.

These values left an impression on Igor, shaping his approach to life as he grew older. By the time he turned twelve, he was already notably tall for his age, a physical trait that set him apart from his peers. The years were not always kind to him. By the age of thirty-five, the continuous hardships he faced had taken their toll, leaving him with a scruffy and worn appearance that reflected the hard path he had travelled. He married Olga when he was twenty-seven, and she has been his companion ever since.

Igor paused, gathering his thoughts before addressing Olga. "I have an important meeting in Ankara," he says, his tone serious.

Olga looked at him with a mixture of surprise and concern. "What meeting? You never told me about it," she replies, her voice reflecting both curiosity and a hint of skepticism.

Igor hesitated for a moment, then responded, "Oh—I must have forgotten. I must travel to Ankara. I will be back in a few days." He attempted to sound casual, but the urgency in his voice betrayed his anxiety.

Olga regarded him thoughtfully. "Okay, if you must," she says finally, her acceptance gentle but laced with concern. Though reluctant, she understood the necessity of his journey.

As Igor prepared for his journey, a wave of fear and uncertainty swept over him. He paced through the hallway, his hands trembling and slick with sweat. The anxiety about what might happen next pressed on him, making each moment feel heavier than the last. His wife stood nearby, her presence steady. She oversaw Igor, offering words of reassurance and practical

guidance. Her encouragement was gentle yet firm, reminding him of the potential benefits the trip could bring. Despite his apprehension, Olga's support gave Igor a fragile sense of resolve as he faced the unknown ahead. Their conversation revealed the energy between them. Olga responded to Igor's mutterings with sharp wit, while Igor, accustomed to dangerous journeys, tried to assure himself that this trip would be easy, "like unfurling a flag."

"Please pack my bags," Igor called out, his voice strained with anxiety as he stepped back into the kitchen. He fumbled for his cigarettes, lighting one with hands that trembled uncontrollably. Seeking a moment of calm, he moved toward the window, parting the curtains to peer outside. Dense snow-laden clouds covered the sky, mirroring the worries pressing down on his thoughts. Soon, the landscape outside was bleak as ever, covered in snow. The urgency of departure was apparent as Igor worried about missing his plane and called Olga, who found his socks in the dresser. The wind howled outside like wolves, and Igor briefly stepped out, shivering in the cold, before quickly returning indoors to finish getting ready.

As Igor prepared to leave, he recalled the words his mother often repeated: "The walls you build around you can only confine you." Though Igor had always allowed himself to dream of bigger things, he realized now that his mother had never cautioned him about the risks that might come with such lofty ambitions.

During his preparations, Olga noticed the state of his old overcoat. She remarked, half-joking and half-concerned, that it was only suitable for birds to build their nests in, pointing out the stains and the fraying edges. Igor, stubbornly attached to the coat, insisted on repairing it himself. However, Olga was adamant that it was beyond saving and said it made him look like a tramp. Reluctantly, Igor agreed to have it fixed as cheaply as possible, but Olga encouraged him to consider buying a new one. She offered to buy him a new coat for his birthday, hoping it would help him present himself better in public.

The cost of purchasing a fresh coat lingered in Igor's thoughts, but he forced himself to focus on what lay ahead. With the weight of his new assignment as a secret agent pressing upon him, Igor understood the necessity of perfecting his ability to deceive. He paced restlessly around the lounge, methodically preparing for the ordeal to come. Pausing for a moment in his routine, he brewed a fresh cup of coffee, discarding the previous stale one, and finished it just as the sound of the taxi pulling up reached him.

With everything in order, Igor bid farewell to Olga, giving her a gentle kiss on the cheek. Olga, ever supportive, wished him a pleasant journey, her encouragement a subtle anchor amid the uncertainty of his mission. After Igor's departure, Olga wrapped herself in a thick winter coat and took the dog outside. In the frosty morning air, she encountered their neighbour, Dmitri, clearing snow from his driveway. Dmitri, a recent arrival to their neighbourhood, bore the visible and invisible marks of his past as a veteran

of the Battle of Stalingrad. Their brief conversation revealed the depth of his struggle—memories haunted him, and the trauma of war lingered in his demeanour and words.

Igor's journey to Ankara was uneventful, except for a persistent feeling of unease that accompanied him throughout the flight. At the airport, he noticed a man in a black trench coat wearing a hat near the station entrance. His trench coat was typical of FSB personnel. He also observed a porter, a man with a long, furrowed face and drooping eyebrows. They both looked suspicious.

The city greeted him with a chill like the one he had left behind, but the unfamiliar streets and hurried faces reminded him he was far from home. After collecting his sparse luggage, he made his way through the arrivals hall, scanning the crowd for any sign of contact. The instructions he had received were vague, which only added to his apprehension.

Taxi, please," Igor said.

He jumped into the cab; his coat caught in the door.

"Excuse me," he says to the taxi driver as the taxi driver slams on his brakes.

He opened the door, grasped his overcoat, and slammed the taxi door.

"It is okay now," says Igor, as he settles into the cab.

"Hey, do you know those two men at the railway station—the one with a trench coat and the porter?

"I know one of them; he is working for the Ministry of Security.

"As what?"

"That I do not know.

"What about the other man, the one who looks like a porter?" asked Igor.

"Do not know him. Everyone who works at the airport is a spy or some form of security," says the taxi driver.

"Where to?" Asked the taxi driver.

Igor gave him a piece of paper. On it were instructions on where he was going.

He was careful not to reveal his destination, directing the driver to a nondescript house in the city. From there, he walked a few kilometres to his destination.

The head of the FSB, a slender man named Andrei, had invited him to an urgent meeting with Maria, an FSB agent from Bucharest.

Walking through a couple of ornate doors, he arrived at the meeting.

"You are late," says Andrei.

"Yes, I know; I had to take a longer route to escape being caught," says Igor.

"When you attend a meeting, you must attend on time."

"Yes, sir," says Igor as he settles down next to Maria.

"Glad to meet you. I am Maria from Bucharest."

"The first thing this morning is that we will introduce everyone so that you may know who your comrades are," says Andrei.

After the introduction, they got into plans for the KGB, highlighting some seminars on spying techniques, avoidance measures, dead letter drop boxes, camouflage measures, gender-changing roles, the use of a pen as a microphone, a video camera, and a deadly tool, the use of an umbrella to insert poison, the use of lapel pins for observation, etc.
“That’s successful,” he observed as Maria changed into a man. Maria was an expert specializing in wigs and makeovers.
“I have a special mission,” says Andrei. “And that would be to steal from the Central Bank of Turkey and blame it on the extreme right-wing organization.”
“Any suggestions on how we will execute the project?” asks Andrei.
“We need extra men,” says Igor.
“We shall get you three—will that be sufficient?” inquired Andrei.
“What type are they?
“The criminal type—does that suit your requirements?” Asked Andrei.
“Yes,”
“I will ask the prison to release three men—they are all behind bars because they committed serious crimes. One is a murderer, another a forger, and the third is a master lock picker.”
Igor left the meeting and went to a nearby cafe, as instructed. Here, he had to wait for further instructions, surrounded by the hum of foreign voices and the aroma of strong Turkish coffee. He glanced at his watch, knowing that every minute spent in this unfamiliar environment brought him closer to the moment his mission would begin. The contact, a coffee shop attendant recognized by a single earring, was waiting for him. Igor started their secret exchange by ordering coffee with two creams and sugar, and he slipped a note to her under the table. As they spoke, Igor carefully memorized her phone number and another number scribbled on a card, which he later discarded, leaving no trace. As he was finishing his coffee, a tall man with a hat and an oversized overcoat came in and sat at the next table. They exchanged glances, and at once Igor knew he was a threat. After finishing his coffee, Igor looked around to see if there were other threats looming. He quietly left the coffeehouse to avoid drawing attention and navigated through the side streets until he reached a waiting car. The driver transported him to a nearby apartment, where three strangers awaited his arrival. Upon entering, a tattooed man conducted a brief security check before allowing Igor to rest and gather his thoughts. Soon after, the group began discussing the details of Igor’s meeting at the cafe. One stranger inquired, “Have you heard of Susan, the girl at the cafe?” Another responded that he might have seen her at the same cafe earlier that day, cautioning Igor to be wary of whom he interacted with.
Igor questions the need for such caution, prompting the stranger to explain, “Because you may never know—they may be spies.” Igor assured them he had not divulged sensitive information. However, the stranger clarified, “It is not the information that you gave; it is the fact that you contacted her—that means a lot to the authorities.” Igor then revealed, “She gave me

information about the bank." When pressed for details, he elaborated, "Information about the vault's security." The group realized the significance of this inside information, specifically the vault's opening code. Igor confirmed, "Yes, inside information about the vault's opening code—that is all I can say. With critical intelligence secured, one stranger asked if the group would proceed with their plan that night. Igor affirms, "That is what the plan is." The group quickly began preparations, with one member stating, "Then we must start preparing. I will get my equipment ready."
That night, at the bank, the gang switched off the power. They then turned off the monitoring cameras, and the team had a clear path to proceed with their operation. Three intruders descended into the bank through a hole cut in its roof, entering undetected. However, their actions triggered an alarm that operated independently of the key security system, drawing power from its own separate source.
"What the hell—I thought the tattooed man had cut the power," one intruder exclaimed in frustration. Recognizing the urgency, another replies, "We must get to the alarm and cut its juice." Acting quickly, one team member climbed to the alarm circuit and turned off its power. "There—now it is off," he confirmed, signalling that they could proceed.
With the alarm neutralized, the team moved to the vault. Igor was present to provide the crucial opening code, enabling them to unlock and empty the vault's contents. Their actions were swift and efficient; within ten minutes, they had completed their task and retraced their steps to exit the bank the same way they had entered.
After leaving the bank, the team headed to the airport, only to find their escape route blocked by security. Forced to improvise, they navigated alternative back ways. "This will delay us," Igor remarked, aware of the growing risk. "Doesn't matter—we must get out now, or we will be trapped," one of the masked intruders insisted.
Igor asks, "Do you know the back way?" to which another intruder confidently replies, "Of course, we live here." Igor considered their options and decided, "Well, we will have to trust what you say." Sadly, the second way out was also blocked, with a heavy police presence. "Hell—this way is blocked too," says the first intruder. Realizing they needed a new plan, Igor proposed, "We will have to ditch the car," and asked, "What is Plan B?"
Without hesitation, the three disguised themselves in women's clothing and hailed a taxi. They went through one roadblock before arriving at the apartment.
"Let us get out of here—they know where we are. I thought I saw a car following us, and then it veered off to a side street," said Igor, trembling with nervousness.
After evading capture and improvising their getaway, the group boarded a single-engine plane bound for Istanbul. The tension remained high as they took off, knowing that their escape route had already faced several unexpected obstacles. During the flight, disaster struck when the engine

spluttered and eventually failed, sending the plane crashing into a forested area north of Ankara.

The impact was devastating. Of the four people on board, three perished in the crash, leaving only the pilot as the sole survivor. The pilot set the emergency button just before the plane went down, starting a distress signal that could bring help.

During the crash, three suitcases landed in the forest, scattering money across a vast expanse of the forest. Only one suitcase survived the turmoil, as Igor salvaged what he could from the burning wreckage. He gathered supplies and spent the night in the forest, keeping warm by a bonfire. Among his belongings was an FSB logbook containing explicit instructions to contact the FSB, the Russian Federation's security agency, if their original plan failed. Alone and stranded, Igor followed these directions, understanding that reaching out to the FSB was now his only option. Using a shortwave transmitter, he sent a code tracker to his handler in Moscow. Within minutes, he got instructions to follow NW28. Using his compass, he set out in that direction. After about an hour of walking, he came across an abandoned house. Upon inspection, Igor found that an older man lived there. Being fluent in Turkish, he greeted the older man walking with a stick.

"Sorry to disturb you. I am lost. Can you help me find my directions?" says Igor in an exhausted voice.

"Come in, have some water first; you look exhausted," says the old man.

"I am exhausted. My car broke down a few miles from here, so I had to come through the forest to find some help," says Igor, his voice trailing.

"The mountain roads can be very tricky. Did you say your car broke down?" asks the old man.

"Yes, a few miles from here, I do not know how many—but I have been on foot for about one hour," says Igor.

"I know a neighbour, George, about five miles through the woods, who may help you. He has a car and can drop you off beside a road, where you can get help from a passing motorist. But now you must rest till morning, then I will let you go," says the old man. The man provided Igor with supper and a bed for the night. He could hear the growling wolves in the woods, but he knew he was safe for the night. The next morning, the old man gave him coffee and saw him off into the woods. He walked through the woods for about an hour, then came across another log cabin. "This must be where George lives," he thought to himself. He had a yellow Volkswagen parked outside. But he remained cautious; one can never trust strangers. He watched George for a few hours and knew that he had military training. He was wearing a camouflage army uniform. And therefore, Igor would wait a few more hours until George fell asleep, and then he would slowly creep into his house and shoot him.

As soon as George turned off his lights to go to sleep, Igor crept slowly and cautiously beside the cabin. He waited a little while, thinking that George would be asleep, as he entered through the back door. Not realizing that

George was aware of someone hiding in the woods, he sprang a surprise on Igor. With one blow to the head, he had Igor on the ground. As he got up, he whacked him a second time, and before Igor could recover, he whacked him for the third time. This time, Igor just realized he was facing a dangerous enemy—with a kick to George's face, he managed to get George off balance, and then, delivering three punches to his face, George was now on the floor as he struggled to get up and, for one moment, did not know where he was, and with one swing of his right hand, he missed Igor's face. But Igor was too masculine for George; he hit him with a crowbar until George lay on the floor, bleeding from his head.

One more blow with the crowbar finished off George. Igor had to get rid of the body, so he dragged George's body up the narrow escarpment, laid him there, and covered him up with a pile of snow. Then, as the snow was falling hard, he knew he left no tracks. He made his way to the Volkswagen parked near the cabin. Luckily, the keys were in the car as Igor made his way down the escarpment and onto the main road. As he passed a bridge, he drove the vehicle onto a sidewalk and eventually into the river. He made his way up from the river and onto the road, hitching a ride to Istanbul, then on to Vienna.

Arriving in Vienna, he rang the bell at his house. There was no answer. He went to the back and peeped through one of the windows; no one was there. "Olga, are you there?" he shouts. No one answered. He tried opening the back door, but to no avail. Being a lock picker, one of his traits from the Moscow training, he managed to get into the house. On the kitchen table, he found a note, and it read:

Dear Igor:

I am leaving you because life has become intolerable for me; you killed my friend George. I know that, and it would be wrong to stay with you any longer.

Bye and good luck.

Loving

Olga.

He sat down on the kitchen chair to gather his thoughts. Igor thought how interesting it was that she knew about George's killing—she must be working for Turkish Intelligence. At that moment, he received a call about a meeting in Moscow. Igor had a meeting the next day, so he did not have to pack his bag before leaving for the station. It took 10 minutes to get there, and he only had 15 minutes before the train departed.

"Hurry," he says in a rough, grumpy voice as he hands two suitcases to the taxi driver. In one of these suitcases, he carried a foldable submachine gun and a pistol. In another suitcase were his clothes, all neatly folded.

"Yes, sir," responded the taxi driver. He dropped one of his suitcases, and the contents spilled out.

“You have a machine gun and a pistol—it is illegal to carry these weapons onto a train,” says the taxi driver. “You must hide these under your clothes in case the police were to stop you.”
“Ah, do not worry, I am a service member. I will explain that to the police.”
“We will be at the station in less than five minutes.” Said the driver.
Arriving at the station, the taxi driver parked his car, helped Igor get out, and handed him his two suitcases.
“Here you are, sir,” says the taxi driver. “Is there anything else I can do for you?”
“No, that will be all.” Igor gave him a tip.
He collected his suitcases and headed for the ticket counter. Igor bought a return ticket to Moscow and, on his way to the cabin, noticed a variety of people trying to board the train. There was a heavily built man with a hooked nose and cunning eyes and a church pastor in black robes, a cross hanging from his neck. Then there was a tall, thin man with a pretty woman. And there were others—all jostling for a place on the train. The wind whistled. Boarding the train, he settled in the last compartment, number thirteen. The minister sat next to Igor. They acknowledged each other with a nod. Igor ignored the men and the woman seated across from him. He pulled out a cigarette and lit it.
“Hi, I am Ivan, and you?” asks the heavily built man.
“Igor,”
“Where to?” asks the man.
“To Moscow…and you?” asks Igor with a laugh, his tobacco-stained teeth showing through.
“To Sofia. I live there … And what do you do for a living?” asked Ivan.
“I am a professional killer,” says Igor with a laugh.
“Really,” says Ivan as he pulls out his chess pieces.
“I came across your name before; if not the name, the voice sounds familiar,” says Igor. “Well, now I remember your voice—even if it is many years back.”
NATO troops had dug an underground tunnel in East Berlin to listen to East German telephone calls, and Ivan, from the MI6 department, was in the underground tunnel. Igor was on the other side, monitoring calls.
“You must be hallucinating,” says Ivan.
“Perhaps I am,” replies Igor as they continue to play chess.
“I heard you own a hotel in Istanbul,” inquires Ivan.
“The Marina,” answers Igor. “Since you are coming to Istanbul, come and stay at the hotel.”
“I will think about it,” replies Ivan.
“If you want a killer, let me know—I’m all for it.” Igor laughs haughtily.
The train pulled out of Vienna station, having just passed under an overhead bridge, and Igor tossed something out of the window.
‘What was that?” asked Ivan.
“Nothing—just some old papers I had to get rid of.”
“I hope nothing important,” says Ivan.

“No, no, absolutely useless,” says Igor as he moves his first piece on the chessboard.
They exchanged the first set of pawns, and Igor had moved his knight to L3. Ivan responded in kind, then moved his knight to L5.
“Your name is not Ivan,” says Igor.
“Why do you say that?”
“Because you sound like an Englishman—a sort of stiff upper lip,” says Igor.
“My adopted country,” says Ivan as he continues to concentrate on the game.
Igor pulled out a bottle of vodka and a couple of glasses from his overcoat.
“We will drink to her Majesty the Queen,” says Igor.
“Salute to her majesty,” as Ivan raised his glass, as did Igor.
They both gulped down their drinks.
“Vodka is good to steady your nerves,” says Igor.
“I certainly agree with that,” says Ivan.
They poured another round, then another, until the bottle was empty.
Someone passed their cabin holding a tape recorder playing Scheherazade.
“Ah, yes—Scheherazade—a thousand tales to spin,” says Igor.
A philosophical question for you: “ Asked Ivan.
Of course,” said Igor.
“What will it be for the world—communism or capitalism?
“Well, it will be difficult to answer that question in one simple sentence, without going into elaborate efforts made to undermine communism or socialism by the West,” says Igor.
“Socialism and communism are a spent force,” says Ivan.
“Democracies can be capitalist or socialist—whatever the people decide. But the democracies practiced are a sort of veneer democracy, and a hypocritical one—there are the powerful elites who control democracies, to give the impression, it is what the masses want, but in reality, once in parliament, you are supposed to vote with the party, a sort of herd democracy where you cannot vote according to your conscience. This whole concept of veneer democracy is tied to a capitalist system,” says Igor.
“But socialism promises everything to all people, and the masses will buy into false promises; the country does not have sufficient resources to meet the people’s expectations. The people fell for rhetoric, knowing little about how economies work,” argued Ivan. He continues. “That is why we overthrow many socialist elected democracies—because they do not function.”
“So, who are you to decide what works or does not work.…” retorts Igor.
“Overthrowing elected governments, replacing them with killers, murderers, and plunderers of national wealth, is a shadowy game played by the West—like an octopus with many tentacles, each tentacle with many toxic pods.”
“What makes you say that?” asks Ivan.
“Of course, they have—as soon as you overthrow the government—within a few months, a salesman from the west arrives with bundles of cash to bribe

the new leaders—you say we believe in democracy, but when you don't like democracies or when they serve the masses, you overthrow them."
They stopped for the day playing chess, and Igor looked at his watch. It was 10 o'clock.
"Time to eat," he says.
"Yes indeed," says Ivan as they make their way to the dining cabin.
It was 10 o'clock, and the restaurant car was welcoming its guests. As they looked at the menu, Igor observed that there was a lady by herself, so he stood up and invited the lady to join him. The lady accepted their invitation.
"This is Ivan, and I am Igor," says Igor, introducing the lady.
"It is a pleasure to meet you; Maria is my name," says the lady.
"Where to?" asked Igor.
"Sofia," says Maria.
"What a pleasure to meet you," says Ivan. "I am from Sofia, and I go when I have finished my business. You go there for business, of course, not pleasure," says Ivan as he gulps down a glass of cognac.
"What is the difference?" asks Igor. "There is always glee involved in business, and there is business in pleasure."
"Ah, but there is no business-like pleasure," says Ivan.
"When you combine business and pleasure, there is more satisfaction than business alone or pleasure alone," says Maria.
"Are you in the pleasure business?" asked Ivan.
"Me… no, no," says Maria.
Changing the subject, Igor says he is in the killing business.
"Is there no mercy in your business?" asks Ivan.
"You mean, am I God? —Is that what you mean?"
"Yes," says Ivan.
"Well, yes, for all intents and purposes—I am God," says Igor.
"Have you been wrong at any time, having found out later that the person you killed is innocent?"
"No, I have not," says Igor.
"Any regrets?" asks Ivan.
"It is what they deserve," says Igor with a straight face.
"Mercy should be an act of God, and ruthless killing is the work of the devil," says Maria.
"There is no God left in me… after Volgograd I lost God, or you may say God left me," Igor retorts as he gulps down a glass of cognac.
"After Volgograd, we lost all hope, replaced by fear and uncertainty. It was hunger, starvation, and death," says Ivan.
"I will take your order now," says the server. "I will have mushroom soup, chicken cacciatore, and peach dessert," says Maria.
"I will have minestrone, tilapia with veggies, and vanilla ice cream," says Igor.
"For me, no soup, lamb with potatoes, mushrooms, and cheesecake for dessert," says Ivan.

“Thank you very much. I will not be long. Oh, how about coffee at the end?” asks the server.
“No, I will not have coffee,” says Maria.
“I will have coffee,” says Ivan.
“What about you, sir?” asks the server to Igor.
“No coffee for me,” says Igor.
“Very well,” says the server as he scampered away to the kitchen and came back. “I meant to ask you if you prefer cream.
“I will not have cream,” says Ivan.
“I would love to visit Sofia,” says Ivan.
“Good, then you can get off in Sofia when the train stops,” says Maria. “You can stay at my place.”
“I would love to do that,” says Ivan.
Maria was a cool operative.
“So how are things in Sofia?” asks Igor.
“So far so good—no enemies—business is normal—my mother and I are both seamstresses,” says Maria.
“Ah, your mother—how old is she?” asks Ivan.
“I would say in her mid-sixties—why do you ask?” says Maria.
“I just wanted to know if she would be comfortable with a stranger like me,” says Ivan.
“Well, if she is not, that is too bad,” says Maria.
Yes, dinner is here," said the server as he brought the first course of soup and buns.
“Bona aperitif,” says Igor as they take their spoons to dip into the soups.
“Buon aperitivo,” says Maria.
Esprit de Camaraderie,” said Ivan, who was keeping a close eye on Maria.
“I once entered an apartment in London with duplicate keys,” says Igor.
“Ah, an inside job,” says Ivan as he turns to Maria.
“Certainly, looks like that,” says Maria.
“The police arrested the concierge,” says Igor. “It was a framed job.”
“How did you get into the apartment?” asked Ivan.
“If I tell you all my secrets, there will be nothing to consider,” says Igor.
“Very well—I will have to sleep on it,” says Ivan.
“Sure, you can sleep all you want—but you won’t discover the truth,” says Igor.
“Moreover, what about you, madam—do you have harrowing stories to tell?” asks Igor.
“Well, once I made a Joker suit for someone, and the next day I discovered the man in the Joker suit had robbed a bank,” says Maria. “After that, my business flourished.”
“Suits for robbers,” says Ivan, “what will they conceive next?”
They soon finished their meal and headed to their compartment, and it was still half an hour before they reached Sofia. The train slowed down to stop at Sofia station.
“We have arrived—beautiful Sofia,” says Maria as she gathers her baggage.

“Are you coming?” Maria says to Ivan.
“No, another time,” says Ivan.
“Of course,” says Maria.
"I will look you up,” says Igor as he stretches his legs, reads for a bit, and dozes off. He must have slept for a good two hours. He woke up suddenly and screamed, “Why are you in my cabin?” as he pointed a pistol at the young man at the door.
“Excuse me- I thought this cabin was empty.”
“How dare you say that—I saw you trying to look in my baggage,” says Igor, flush with anger.
“Tell me who you are—otherwise I will unload this pistol—your brain will be beside you,” says Igor as he moved closer to the man.
“I am so sorry—I upset you,” says the man.
"You not only upset me but angered me,” says Igor as he uncorked his pistol.
The poor man ran for his life into another compartment, and Igor followed.
“I will kill you if you come into my cabin again,” says Igor as he follows another man into the next cabin.
“Are you with this man?” Igor asks a man in the compartment.
“Oh no, I just know him as a traveller,” says the man as he puts up his hands in case Igor fires.
“Show me your identification?” asks Igor.
As they both produced their identifications, Igor noticed they were both forged.
“Where did you get these from?” asks Igor.
“Why do you ask?” says the man.
“Because they are fake,” said Igor as he threw both the identification on the ground and moved his pistol closer to the two men.
Igor closed the compartment door.
“Where did you get these papers?”
“I got them from the bureau—the State Bureau,” says one man. “And what about you?’ asked Igor to the second man.
“The same answer as him,” answers the second man.
Igor slapped the second man.
“Who told you to follow me?”
“ We are just travelling like you—we don’t have any clue as to what is going on; no one told us to follow you” says the first man” You are lying and for that I will tie you up for one hour- until I get an answer from either of you” says Igor- as he tied the two man up and put a masking tape on their mouth “ when you are ready to tell me I will unfasten you- you understand?” says Igor as he left the two man in their compartments. No confession appeared after an hour.
“Well, are you going to confess- or shall I do something more drastic?”
The two men mumbled behind masking tape over their mouths.
“I know what I will do- I will hang one of you onto the side of the train- see if that makes you tell me the truth,” says Igor as he let one man out of the

cabin and tied him to the side of the train. The screaming and shouting were too much for the other passengers, who came out to see what was going on.

“You cannot do that- this is a public transport system- you cannot take the law into your own hands,” says one of the passengers.

It is callous of you to treat passengers in such a manner,” says another, and the screaming and howling went on for about half an hour until Igor finally listened to the passengers’ pleas and untied the man. So, a man from Moscow kills George and harasses other passengers, but he faces no repercussions for it.